

# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Mississippi Baptists gather for session

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

Messengers to the 169th annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) at First Church, Jackson, made history on October 26 when they elected by acclamation the convention's first Hispanic officer in Joel Medina, bivocational pastor of Iglesia Internacional Las Americas in Carthage. He will serve the convention as second vice-president for the coming year.

Medina replaces Archie Herrin, missions director for Tri-County Association in Columbia, who had served two terms as second vice-president and was not eligible for reelection. Medina was nominated by Chris Carter, pastor and messenger from Madden Church, Madden. Grady Crowell, missions director for Clarke Association and messenger from First Church, Quitman, seconded the nomination.

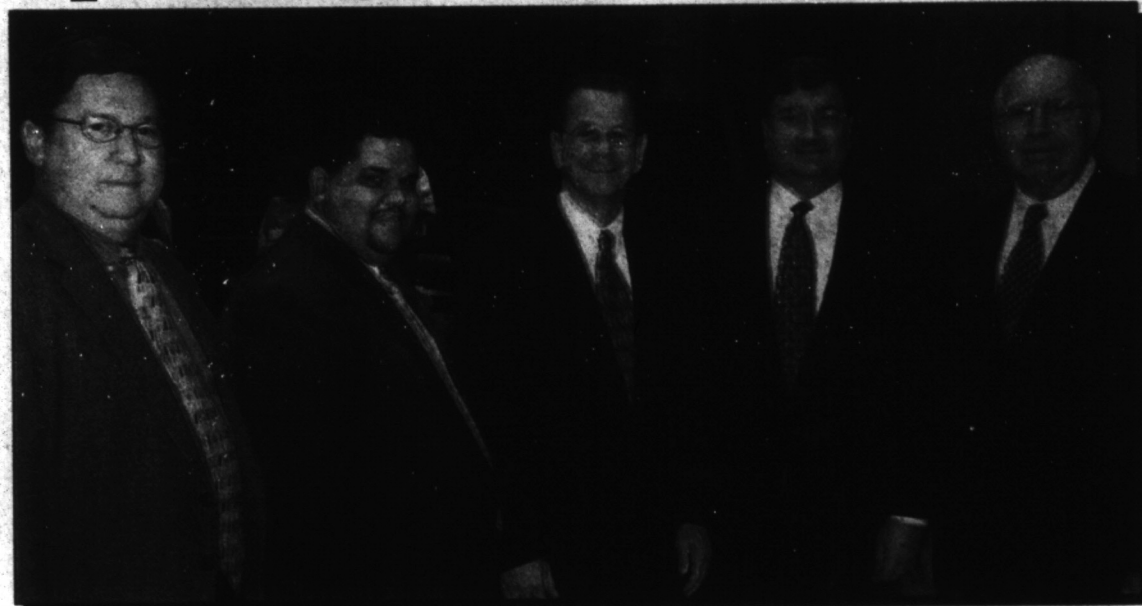
Messengers also reelected by acclamation Gene Henderson, pastor of First Church, Brandon, to a second term as president. Henderson was nominated by U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Charles Pickering, a messenger from First Church, Laurel. Bob Dominy, pastor and messenger from Park Place Church, Pearl, seconded the nomination.

Thad Moore, pastor of Poplar Springs Drive Church in Meridian, was reelected by acclamation to a second term as first vice-president. Moore was nominated by Bryant Barnes, pastor and messenger from Calvary Church, Tupelo. Jimmy Williams, pastor and messenger from Fellowship Church, Meridian, seconded the nomination.

Moore also delivered the convention sermon, from Philippians 1:12.

Gus Merritt, retired pastor of Clarke Venable Church, Decatur, was reelected recording secretary and Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, was reelected as associate recording secretary.

The official messenger registration count



**MBC OFFICERS** — Newly-elected officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention are (from left) Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, associate recording secretary; Joel Medina, pastor of Iglesia Internacional Las Americas Church, Carthage, second vice-president; Gene Henderson, pastor of First Church, Brandon, president; Thad Moore, pastor of Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian, first vice-president; and Gus Merritt, retired former pastor of Clarke Venable Church, Newton, recording secretary. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

for the 2004 meeting was 1,236, a decline of 177 messengers from the 2003 meeting.

Messengers approved without dissent a 2005 Mississippi Baptist Cooperative Program budget of \$31,314,491, a 1.49% increase over the current year. The portion of the budget going to Southern Baptist Convention causes remains steady at 35%, or \$10,960,071 for the 2005 budget year — also a 1.49% increase over the current budget.

Resolutions approved included:

- Support for constitutional amendments on a number of ballots around the country that limit the definition of marriage to the union of one man and one woman. The resolution was proposed by Charles Davis, missions director for Pike Association in McComb and messenger

from First Church, McComb.

- Setting aside of the first Tuesday of each month as a time of prayer and fasting for revival in America. The resolution was proposed by Paul Spradley, a messenger from Second Church, Indianola; Roy Clark, pastor and messenger from Second Church, Indianola; and Russell Mord, pastor and messenger from Sturgis Church, Sturgis.

In response to a motion from the 2003 annual meeting that proposed messengers adopt the revised Baptist Faith and Message, the chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee read the following statement on behalf of the committee:

"I move that the Mississippi Baptist Convention reaffirm their historical position that the Word of God is our standard of faith and practice, and recognize that the Baptist Faith and Message can serve as a guide for understanding and teaching Baptist doctrine," said Ken Anderson, pastor and messenger from Parkway Church, Clinton. The motion passed.

Praise and worship leadership was provided by Phil Jones, minister of music at First Church, Brandon; Lance Word, minister of youth at Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian; and Graham Smith, church music director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.

Among the groups performing at the annual meeting were the Sanctuary Choir of First Church, Brandon; the Reflections Choir from Baptist-affiliated Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain; Carpenter's Wood and the Chorale from Baptist-affiliated William Carey College in Hattiesburg; and the Mississippi Singing Churchmen.

The 2005 MBC annual meeting will be held November 1-2 at First Church, Jackson.

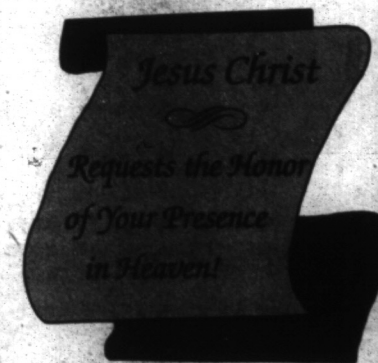
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**SPECIAL 145TH ANNUAL  
MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST  
CONVENTION ISSUE**



**YOU CAN RESPOND  
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*Simply share the following  
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1. Lord, I admit that I need you.  
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  2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.  
(*I repent.*)
  3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.  
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
  4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him.  
(*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)
- But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).*

*If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.*



**CHECKING IN** — Messengers from cooperating Mississippi Baptist churches sign in at the registration table on October 26 prior to the start of the 169th annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson. A total of 1,236 messengers registered for the annual session. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)





MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

# 169th Annual Mississippi

October 26 & 27, 2004 • First



Photos by William H. Perkins Jr. & Tony Marti

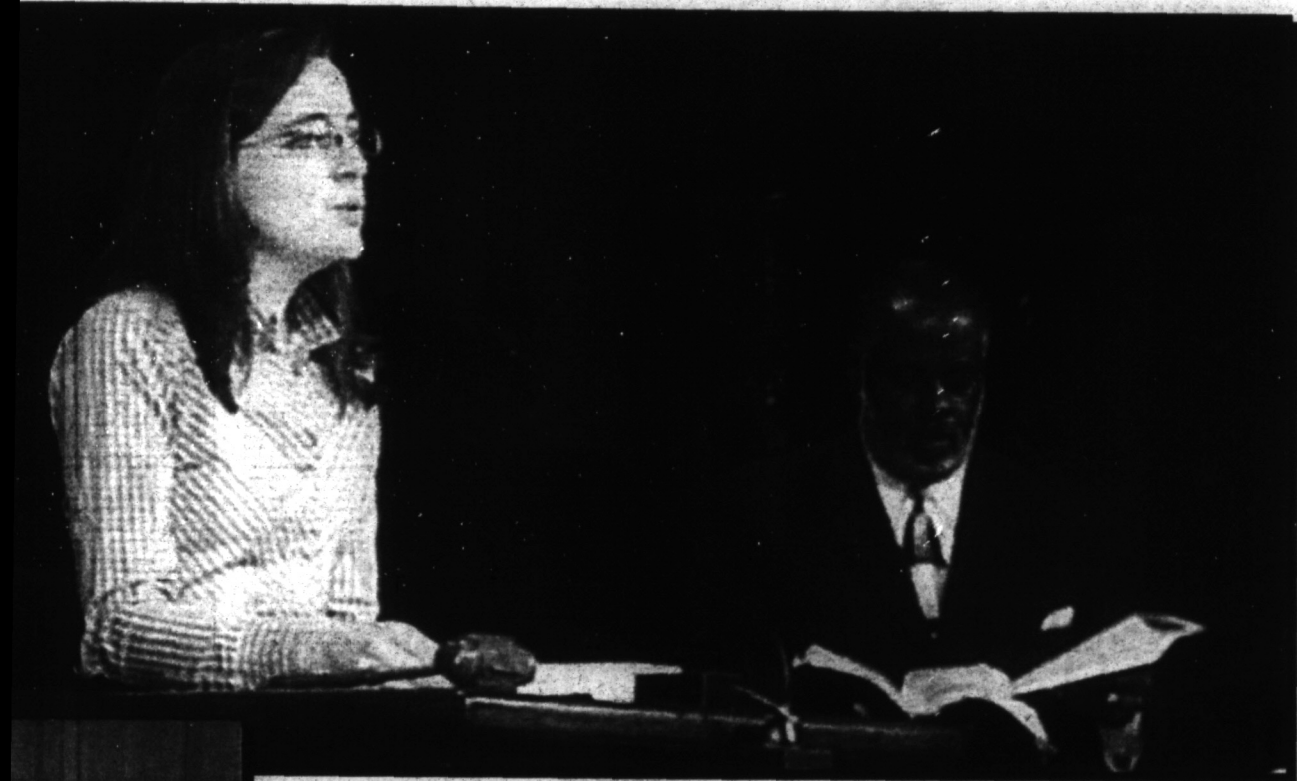


# Mississippi Baptist Convention

First Baptist Church, Jackson



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

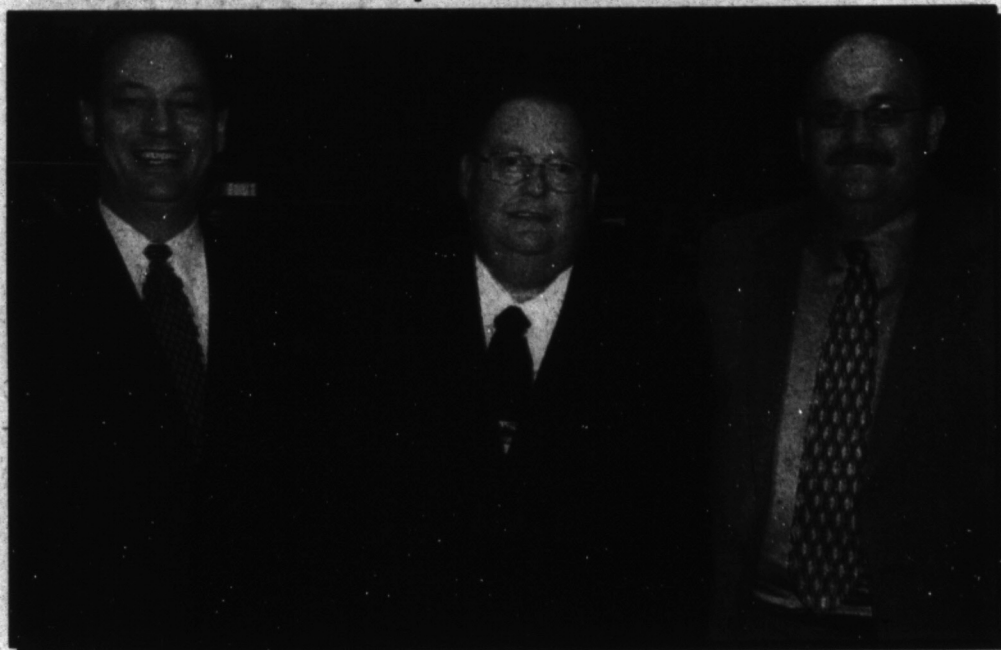




# Miss. pastors meet for preaching, worship

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

Mississippi Baptist pastors gathered at First Church, Jackson, on October 25 for their annual Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference, traditionally held in the



## CONFERENCE OFFICERS

— Joe Turner (left), pastor of First Church, Horn Lake, was chosen on October 25 to serve as president-elect of the Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference. Don Boone (center), pastor of First Church, Louisville, is the incoming president of the conference. Dean Stewart (right), senior pastor of 38th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, is outgoing president. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Sanctuary of First Church, Jackson, on the day prior to the start of the annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Following the theme of "How Beautiful Are the Feet of Them That Preach the Gospel" (Romans 10:15), preachers included:

- D.J. Benson, senior pastor of Salem Heights Church, Laurel.
- John Merck, pastor of Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale.
- W.D. "Step" Martin, retired pastor of Calvary Church, Shreveport, La.
- Fred Wolfe, retired pastor of Cottage Hill Church, Mobile, Ala., and former resident of Brandon.
- John Phillips, Bible commentary author from Bowling Green, Ky.
- Junior Hill, evangelist of Hartselle, Ala.
- Ronnie Cottingham, music evangelist from Lucedale, provided message in song, while Ken Adams, minister of music at 38th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, led congregational singing.
- D.J. Benson preached from Romans 1:15. Striking a blow against Calvinism, Benson said, "There is no limited atonement. Irresistible grace? Baloney!"
- John Merck preached from Hebrews 9:22. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. Without the

shedding of blood, there is no message to preach. Without the shedding of blood, no sinner has hope of salvation and eternal life," he explained.

W.D. "Step" Martin, utilizing a number of Scripture passages, said, "God doesn't want to be just first; he wants to be all."

Fred Wolfe preached from 2 Corinthians 4:5. "It's not about you and it's not about me. How can it be about us when it is about Him, Jesus Christ?" he stressed.

John Phillips, a native of Great Britain, preached from Psalm 24. "Planet Earth is the Lord's. That's his claim; it all belongs to him," he pointed out.

Junior Hill preached from Luke 8. "The church is not great because it's growing. That's a carnal assessment," he observed. "The church is growing because it's great."

Dean Stewart, senior pastor of 38th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, served as 2004 president of the conference and planned this year's conference program. Don Boone, pastor of First Church, Louisville, is the incoming president and will plan the 2005 conference program. Joe Turner, pastor of First Church, Horn Lake, was chosen as president-elect and will be responsible for the 2006 conference program.

## Akin inaugurated at Southeastern

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Amidst a throng of family, friends and students, Daniel Akin was inaugurated as president of Southeastern Seminary in an Oct. 27 ceremony "devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ."

More than a thousand people packed Binkley Chapel, in the center of the Southeastern's Wake Forest, N.C., campus, to witness the inauguration of only the sixth president in the seminary's 53-year history.

"On behalf of 42,000 churches and 16 million Southern Baptists, I congratulate Dr. Akin on this momentous day from which Southeastern will go forward for the glory of God. This institution will continue to be a lighthouse for the glory of God all around the world. I thank God, as do all Southern Baptists, that this humble servant comes to the helm of leadership," said Morris Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville.

Tim Lewis, chairman of the seminary's trustees, echoed Chapman's sentiments. "This is a glorious day in the life of this institution, a day for which we have prayed, planned and sought the Lord's will. Dr. Akin is a man of commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and to good thinking about theology based on a firm faith in the inerrancy of God's Word. He is a man of proven character, with a contagious passion for life, living and people. I know of no other man more adequately prepared to be president of Southeastern than Dr. Akin."

The chapel ceremony was the culmination of a weeklong celebration at Southeastern, where many Southern Baptist leaders gathered to honor Akin for his character and dedication but reserved for the glory for Jesus Christ.

"All that matters in life is that you please Jesus," Akin said. "My sole passion in life is to live under His lordship."

In an Oct. 24 gathering with the seminary family at Akin's home church, Wake Cross Roads Church in Raleigh, Johnny Hunt, pastor of the Atlanta-area Woodstock Church, noted to Akin, "You need to remember that what is important to the leader is important to the follower. A spiritual leader says, 'Follow me.' Establish a path for others to follow. They're going to be watching you. Preach with purity and integrity of doctrine. Preach with integrity, dignity and sincerity, and curiosity will follow."

Speakers at inauguration events included Akin's personal friends James Merritt, pastor of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Ga., and R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

A common refrain from those who know Akin best was that behind the aura of leadership, Akin is a genuine man of God. "Daniel Akin is a man of 100% integrity..." Merritt said.

Delivering the charge to Akin was Southwestern Seminary President Paige Patterson, Akin's immediate predecessor at Southeastern and a man Akin calls his "father in ministry."

## MEET MUHAMMAD.

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## HOMEcoming & Revival Dates

**Crosby, Crosby:** Revival November 5-7; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. with potluck dinner following; Rob Westbrook, preaching; Scott Kirby, music.

**New Hope, Mt. Olive:** Homecoming and Dedication November 7; Sunday, 11 a.m.; lunch will be served; afternoon with Next Generation; Lane Varner, pastor.

**Calvary, Petal:** Revival November 7-10; Sunday, 9:45 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.; free Wednesday supper at 5:45 p.m.; Alben Gaston, evangelist; Calvary musicians, music; nursery provided.

**Macedonia, Meridian:** Homecoming November 7; a covered dish lunch will follow morning worship; Danny Moss, former pastor, preaching; Jason C. Gross, pastor.

**Southside, Jackson:** 65th Anniversary November 7; Bible study, 9 a.m.; worship, 10:15 a.m.; dinner will follow; Jeffrey R. Parker, pastor; all former members are invited.

**Big Level, Wiggins:** Revival November 7-10; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner following, and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, MBCB, evangelist; Hubert Greer, music; David Perry, pastor; for more information, call (601) 528-9412 or (601) 928-3898.

**Jupiter, Simpson Association:** Revival November 7-10; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Adams, Jon Haines, Charles Broome, Dennis Campbell, preaching; Bruce Jolly, pastor.

**First, Belzoni:** Harvest Day November 14; worship, 10 a.m.; a covered dish lunch will follow; Wayne Coleman, preaching; George C. Johnson, pastor; all are invited.

**First, Braxton:** 125th Anniversary and Revival November 8-10; Sunday, 11 a.m. and dinner following; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jerry Mixon, MBCB, evangelist.

**First, Lauderdale:** Homecoming November 14;

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; lunch following; Mike Russell, former pastor, speaking; Tom Harrison, music; Jerry Bishop, pastor; all are invited; for more information, call (601) 679-5586.

**Gunter Road, Florence:** 25th Anniversary November 14; dinner will be served; Harmony and Grits, 1 p.m.; Dale Holloway, former pastor, speaking; Gene Jordan, pastor; all are welcome.

**Harrisville, Simpson Association:** Revival November 7-10; Sunday, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10 a.m. worship, discipleship training at 5:30 p.m.; and worship at 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Dennis Allen, First, Baker, La., guest preacher; Steve Walker, Pinola, music; for more information, call (601) 847-1593.

**First, Anguilla:** Revival November 14-17; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bob Smith, evangelist; Emily Carter, music; Brad Moak, pastor.

## Just for the Record

**First Church, Edinburg,** will hold a pastor's preaching conference November 11-12 at 7 p.m. nightly. Billy Henry is the host pastor. For more information, call (601) 267-4250.

**Center Hill Church, Hamilton,** will present Experiencing God, Learn the 7 Realities of God, November 12-14. Call (662) 343-5591 for more information.

**Russell Church, Meridian,** will present David Ring, I Have Cerebral Palsy-What's Your Problem?, November 23 at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call (601) 482-3577.

**Park Haven Church, Laurel,** will host the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer November 7 at 2 p.m. National Baptist, Southern Baptist, and Hispanic Baptist, all women are invited.

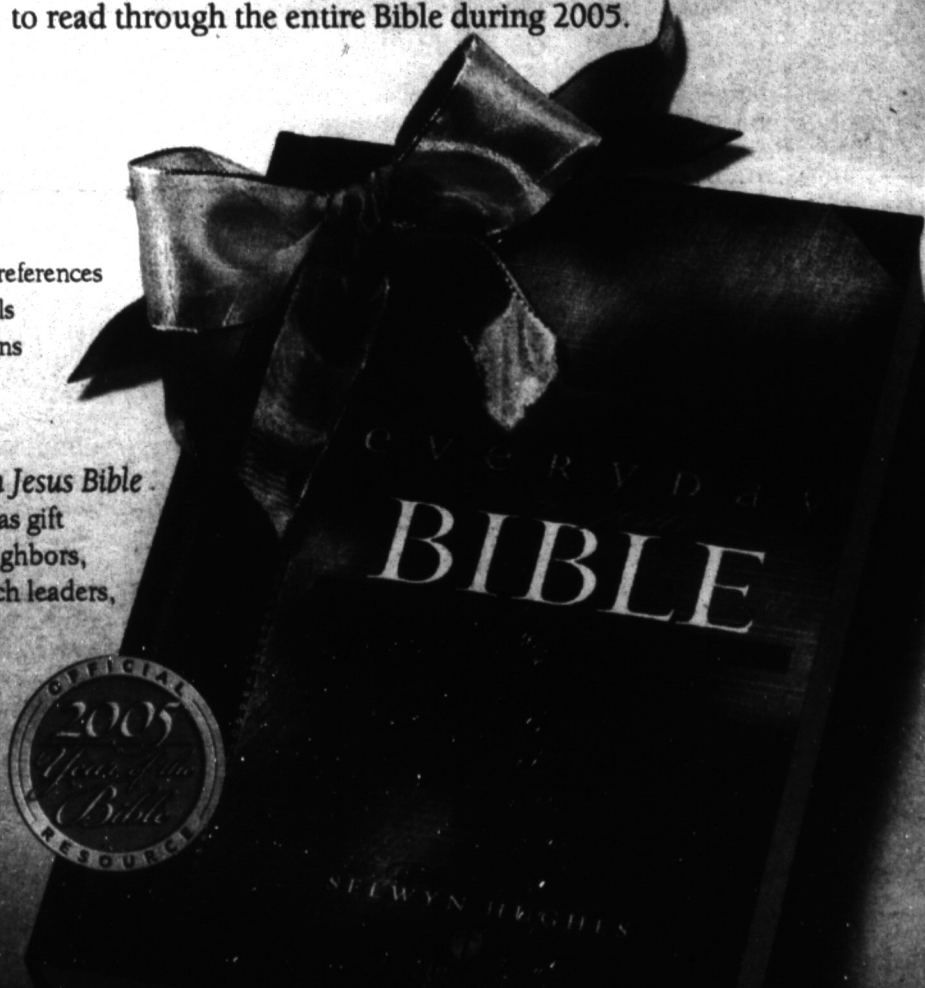
## One Year. One Challenge. One Bible at the Heart of It All.

The Every Day with Jesus Bible has been declared the official resource of the "Year of the Bible" resolution urging every Southern Baptist to read through the entire Bible during 2005.

### Readers will enjoy:

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The Every Day with Jesus Bible is the perfect Christmas gift for family, friends, neighbors, ministerial staff, church leaders, and co-workers.



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## COLLEGE NEWS

James Sclater, professor in the Department of Music, Mississippi College, has been named the winner of a composition contest sponsored by VocalEssence, a professional choral organization based in Minneapolis, Minn., and the American Composers Forum. The winning work, A Piping Carol, will premiere as part of the Welcome Christmas! concerts presented each year in Minneapolis. Premiere is set for December 5 with additional performances December 11 and 12. The concert will be recorded by Minnesota Public Radio for national distribution in 2005 by American Public Media.

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## SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL Reception honoring Larry & Sandy Black

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# FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

## God Is Awesome

Psalm 104:1-5, 13-15, 24, 27-30

By Geneva England

Awesome is a word teenagers overuse as a slang superlative to mean "wonderful," "unbelievable," "beyond the ordinary," or even "beautiful." I cringe at this misuse because I believe awesome should be reserved for describing God only. Its biblical definition, according to Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, means "honor, fear, and respect." Psalms 104 covers all these attributes of God.

Honor: God is "very great...clothed with honor and majesty" (v. 1). He created the heavens, the earth, and everything within. Eternal God, existing before the foundation of earth, is greater than any created being. His Shekinah glory is so bright that no man can see it in its fullness and live; He is splendorous. Enthroned on high as our King, He is majestic. His name is a name above

all other names. Because of his exalted position as Creator and Savior, we owe God alone our praise. When the psalmist repeats, "O my soul," (vv. 1, 35) we are given an insight into the deepness of his devotion. As believers, we must strive for that same degree of devotion and honor.

Fear: Fear involves the "emotions of terror and anxiety," along with the "attitude of respect and submission" when we are worshipping God (HIBD). The psalmist understood this fear and recorded that all of God's creations depend on God for sustenance. On the other hand, when God "hide[s]" His face, "they are terrified" (v. 29, NIV). Likewise, they tremble when He holds them accountable (v. 29).

Reverence [respect]: Reverence is "respect or honor paid to a worthy object"

(HIBD). Failing to reverence God has serious consequences as learned from Adam and Eve, the Hebrew nation, NT scribes and Pharisees, and others.

### AWESOME CREATOR (PSALM 104:1-5)

The psalmist employs an analogy of God's creating the heavens and earth to building a dwelling ["tent"]. When God laid the foundational beams for the chambers, He then stretched the sky above like the canopy of a tent. He made His presence known by controlling the clouds and wind (vv. 2-5). The phrase, "who maketh the clouds his chariot" (v. 3), is a beautiful poetic expression of God's grandeur.

Skeptics and atheists arguing for evolution or the big bang theory may try to refute verse 5 by pointing out that the earth has no literal foundations and it does move by revolving. What they do not understand is that the foundations of the earth exist solely because of the Creator, known now by us as the Father, the Son,

and the Holy Spirit. As believers, you and I, likewise have a solid foundation when we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. What confidence this foundation provides! Foolish indeed are those who fail to recognize and worship God as awesome Creator.

### AWESOME PROVIDER (PSALM 104:13-15)

The Psalmist praises God as the provider for daily sustenance. God provides water, plant growth, and animals for meat. His chain of survival among all the creatures that live in, on, and above earth is indeed awesome. Recently, we toured a peregrine falcon restoration reserve and heard the tale of an egg being incubated with enormous care such as the correct temperature, rotation, etc., yet the chick was not developing properly. The egg was removed from the so-called perfect environment and placed under a setting falcon hen. In no time she had restored the hatchling to normalcy. What a miracle! God created Earth perfect; humans have steadily misused it, beginning with Adam and Eve.

### AWESOME SUSTAINER (PSALM 104:24, 27-30)

Not only is God our Creator; He is also our Sustainer. Today, people have become pleasure seekers, following the lust of the flesh, of the eye, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17) more than God. It is a sad commentary on our leaders who ignore God's laws and commands. Do not be deceived: God will bring judgment upon sinful individuals and upon sinful nations.

Again, the psalmist magnifies the Lord for His daily provisions "at the proper time" (v. 27, NIV). God holds the key to survival for all creation because too much rain or sun will alter the weather in such a way as to interfere with the food chain; however, God, "in wisdom," (v. 24) has everything timed so that the plant and animal kingdoms are sustained.

Verse 31 adds a fitting acclamation to our praise: "The glory of the Lord shall endure forever, the Lord shall rejoice in his works."

England is a member of First Church, Grenada.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## A New Responsibility

Luke 9:57 10:4, 8-9, 17-20

By Tony Martin

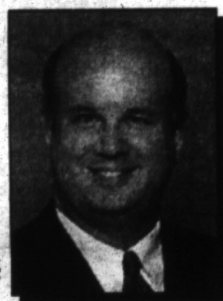
Our son, Cpl. Jeremy Martin, is in Iraq with the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, out of Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. While he can't be too specific as to his location, we have a very good sense of where he is. He assures us he's fine, but as a mortarman, an infantry grunt, we know that he is in harm's way. We have a strong sense that he's actively participating in God's plan for his life.

As parents, it was difficult to see him head for the sandbox for the second time. I can't help but wonder what it must've been like for the disciples to have told their families that they were leaving everything to follow Jesus. Talk about commitment! Jesus was up front with these men; in 9:57-62, he

was very frank in describing the cost of following him. Being a disciple of Jesus would mean hardship and sacrifice.

How would you have consoled the families of those disciples? As you look at the challenges Jesus presented in 9:57-62, which would be the hardest for you to accept, and why?

Jesus uses agricultural terms in Luke 10:1-4. As Mississippians, we live in an agrarian society. We understand the cycle of planting, nurturing, and harvest. We are also aware of how inclement weather or draught can ruin a harvest. Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs, and gave them specific instructions in v. 4: do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road (NIV). The disciples were to trust Jesus



Martin

to meet their needs. What baggage are you carrying? What does your baggage show about your willingness to serve in faith? Do we really trust Jesus to meet our needs?

Luke 10:8-9 describes how Jesus asked his disciples to minister in whatever town they entered. We are still called to minister in the same fashion, wherever we are and with whatever means we can.

The Hattiesburg American recently ran a story on Charla Hudson and Joan Terrell ministering to troubled teens. According to the article, Hudson and Terrell have volunteered in programs that served at-risk children, especially teenagers. Their plans include a House of Hope, a facility dedicated to the healing of hurting children. While other programs try to meet the needs of teens, Hudson and Terrell have an approach which stresses demonstrating God's love through Christ. Their approach demonstrates ministry according

to Jesus' instructions.

We have opportunities to minister in the same fashion. As we go, we are obligated to seek out those who are sick, or hurting, or simply in need of a kind word. While we may find that it is difficult to minister where we are, God supernaturally empowers us to meet the needs of those we see daily.

Luke 10:17-20 tells the rest of the story, how the seventy-two returned from their mission. They rejoiced in God's power, which is far removed from our tendency to rejoice in our own power. In church life, we are prone to take credit for things God has done. There is a huge difference in celebrating earthly achievements and rejoicing in God's power.

How do you feel about the harvest where you live? Are there unrealized opportunities all about you? Are the people in your community ripe for the Gospel? Scripture teaches that we often find ourselves as lambs among wolves, a graphic description of how hostile the world can be to us as believers.

These verses show many of the privileges we have in Jesus Christ. We have authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome the power of the enemy. "Nothing can harm you," Jesus said in v. 19. There have been many Christians who've been martyred for their faith, but Jesus wants us to know that while enemies might destroy our mortal bodies, our souls are immortal, and we are guaranteed safe harbor eternally in heaven with Him. The disciples who were prone to boasting were very proud of how demons submitted to them. Jesus told them that, as good as that was, their true cause of rejoicing should be that their names were written in heaven.

Whatever gifts may be yours, whatever opportunities God may grant, rest secure in the knowledge that you are God's, and there is nothing you can do that could cause Him to love you any more than He does right now.

Martin is associate editor of the Baptist Record.

# Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible,

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST  
**Record**



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

OCTOBER 16 - 31, 2004  
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The Baptist Children's Village India Nunnery Campus in Jackson will be collecting boxes for Operation Christmas Child project November 15th-21st. Please call 601-922-2242 or visit www.baptistchildrensvillage.com for more information.

The Baptist Children's Village needs your help this holiday season with the following items:

### Holiday Food Items:

- Turkeys • Cranberry sauce • Canned/Frozen Vegetables • Hams
- Stuffing/Dressing • Rolls/Biscuits • Cake icing • Cake mixes • Frozen pies
- Spices • Pecans/Walnuts • Fresh/Canned Fruit

### Gift Cards/Certificates to the following stores/restaurants:

- \*These items can be used for Christmas gifts, birthdays or for needed clothing items.
- Wal-Mart • Sears • Target • Best Buy • Old Navy • McRaes
- Dillard's • JC Penney • Payless Shoes • Big & Tall • House of Brand
- United Artist • Pizza Hut • Mazzo's • Chick Fil-A • McDonald's
- Burger King • Wendy's • Dairy Queen • Baskin Robbins
- Kentucky Fried Chicken

Long-Distance Phone Cards are needed for the children to call and stay in touch with family.

### Monetary Gifts in honor of a BCV resident(s):

Send a monetary donation to The Baptist Children's Village designated as a Holiday Honor to provide for the daily needs of a resident, and we will send a card to a child that a gift has been given in their honor.

Contact Us-For more information on a holiday project for you or your group contact:

Chrystelle Thames, Dir. of Public Relations

at (601) 922-2242 or e-mail at cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com.

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# Christian officer treks on despite setbacks

BAGHDAD (BP) — "We hate American soldiers," an Iraqi man snaps at Captain Michael Rainey from the back of a crowd of eight men, all in their mid-20s. The greenish glow of a fluorescent light from a small store nearby reveals a stubble beard growing on the Iraqi man's face. He folds his arms across his chest as if prepared for a battle response, but Captain Rainey does not fulfill his expectation. He says only, "OK."

Along the neighborhood street in the district of Ghazalia, six miles west of central Baghdad, four tan U.S. military Humvees are parked sparsely along the street. Gunners sit on top of the vehicles with their hands resting tranquilly across their machine guns. At the entrance to the neighborhood, a car is blocked by the 113s and Bradleys (civilians call them tanks) but then passes by after a quick look and consent by the American soldiers.

A man in a flowing white gown with three children at his side walks by one of the armed vehicles. They ignore the soldiers as they walk slowly, attentive only to the soft melting chocolate and green-colored ice cream dripping down the sides of the white wafer cones they hold.

Neighborhood children have surrounded several American soldiers who have climbed out of the vehicles. The children are poking at their uniforms and asking for candy. Scattered along the street, Iraqi neighbors are standing and sitting in front of their houses. Some have brought lawn chairs to watch the show brought to their front door.

Unsatisfied with Captain Rainey's response, the man with the stubble beard declares again: "We hate American soldiers."

After a pause, Rainey asks slowly and deliberately, "Are we disturbing you or harming you in some way by being here?"

A clean-shaven Iraqi man standing in front of the group answers in English, "Well, I would like to go home in my car to my house because I have to study for an exam at the uni-

versity and I cannot go because you have the street blocked."

Rainey answers, "You can leave; in fact I will have my men escort you past the blockade." The man steps back into the crowd not interested in grasping the opportunity.

For the third time the stubble-bearded man states, "We hate American soldiers." The captain asks the man if his soldiers have done something bad to him or his neighborhood. The man waves his arms and says, "They scare the people."

"What do my soldiers do that scares them?" Rainey asks. The man complains about the noise and presence of the 113s and the Humvees and then changes in mid-sentence to the fact that electricity is sporadic and it is too hot to be without fans.

Captain Rainey addresses the electricity problem, explaining that it is difficult to keep electricity going when terrorists place bombs under the power lines. He asks the crowd if they understand that, but no one answers. "I tell my soldiers to treat the people of Ghazalia with dignity and respect; if they aren't doing that, I want to know." The crowd listens quietly.

One of the men from the crowd, speaking in English, says, "We want the electricity on like you have in America ... and the sewage fixed. We want good lives. We know how you live there and we think you bring that to us. But you bring terror and scare the people."

When asked who is detonating the bombs and who is on the attack, the man replies, "These are the radical crazy people who follow anyone because they are ignorant. They make the bombs." Another man interjects, "We do not want the American

coalition to leave now because, I ask you, what will we do? These people will take our country."

Captain Rainey commands a platoon of 88. He is a soldier

Ghazalia by roadside bombs detonated as their vehicles passed by. The captain says those deaths had a significant impact on him and his company.

"I was not prepared for the deaths but it doesn't change how we view the neighborhood of Ghazalia." He hangs his head as he speaks and remembers.

"It was personal and emotional. We cannot let it affect our focus. God created every emotion and we know that while he tells us in the Bible that He is peaceful and loving, He gets angry and jealous as well. So I think what God is trying to tell us is that the emotion itself is not bad but the things we humans do, as part of the emotion, can be bad. The Old Testament is full of warriors that fought for God's people."

"Joshua is the original company commander. He led a small number of people against a large army. Because of his faith in God, he was able to overcome."

Rainey continues, "As much as I love the people in Ghazalia, I know that there are people here who want to hurt us. I think by carrying guns my soldiers protect themselves."

As two helicopters hum low overhead, Rainey explains his dreams for Ghazalia, saying, "My hope is to see the kids of Ghazalia walk out their front door without having to tiptoe through sewage and trash. I want each person to be able to choose to have electrical power on or off by a flip on a switch."

"What I don't want is when a kid sees an American soldier to pick up a rock and throw it at us and, finally, I would like to see a local government the people trust."



Rainey

who fully believes in his objective. He explains that he does not have a political agenda but that his focus is on his assignment in the district of Ghazalia. "After spending one week in Ghazalia I know that we are supposed to be here. I know my God supports our work in Ghazalia," he affirms.

"If our purpose as a country is that Iraq can transition to a new government, then I know that my company has the same objective to ensure that Ghazalia is safe and secure so they can transfer to a new government on a smaller personal level."

During Rainey's command with Bravo Company, three soldiers have been killed in

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PKV CMH, OZPO FANA  
QMUAOUYA PSYAKPOAV  
PKV AKAUYAQ YK CMHN  
UYKV RC FYIWAU  
FMNWQ, CAO KMF ZPOZ  
ZA NAIMKIYSAV.

IMSMQQYPKQ MKA:  
OFAKOC-MKA

Clue: C = Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans 12:20

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